

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates. The cable ownership

cap is a crucial element of our democratic media, and it should not be weakened.

On repeated occasions FCC Chairman Powell has stated the market place will decide the best cable TV, broadcast TV and broadcast radio program content. What type of marketplace is Chairman Powell referring to? one with a multitude of unrelated and independent content providers or one with a very limited number of large multilevel content providers? An open and free flowing, truly competitive marketplace requires the former structure, not the latter where perhaps a half dozen or less mega-media conglomerates own and operate multiple cable and broadcast outlets in one market and throughout the country. In view of this, how does the FCC equate granting ever-increasing consolidation of media ownership?

The ownership caps and broadcast/newspaper cross-ownership rules were put in place to stimulate diversity, not restrict it. Lifting the ownership caps and weakening the cross-ownership rules stifle diversity, not enhance it. The FCC's lessening of these regulations has contributed to the decline in viewing/listening audience just as much as, if not more so than the entry of new media. The very large media companies are causing people to tune out and turn off broadcast TV and radio, and cable TV at an ever-increasing rate. Why? Programming sameness and dullness. Unlike other markets such as retail and food where new competition can truly evolve, the airways and cable broadcasting are very restricted. Broadcast spectrum and access limitations were some of the reasons for establishing the FCC.

Rather than continuing the dismantling of the ownership caps and ownership crossover rules, I urge the FCC to reverse this trend by reinstating the old ownership caps and crossover rules.